GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3121
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2017
Agrarian Crisis
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has conducted any study on the regions facing agrarian crisis in the country;

(b) if so, the details and the outcome thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to encourage the use of modern agricultural techniques to sustain growth of agriculture and to solve the problem of agrarian crisis in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

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(a) & (b): Taking cognizance of the problem of Agrarian distress and consequent farmers suicide in country, Government has undertaken a study "Farmers Suicide in India: Causes and Policy Prescription" as an All India coordinated study in the work plan 2016-17. The study was allotted to Institute of Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bengaluru as a coordinator of the study. The study is being conducted in major suicide hit States of the country.

(c): Agriculture, including agricultural indebtedness, being a State subject, the State Governments take appropriate measures for development of agriculture in the State. However, Government of India supplements the efforts of States through appropriate policy measures and budgetary support.

Under agriculture mechanization, there is a programme namely, Submission on Agricultural Mechanisation (SMAM) is concerned, financial assistance as cost subsidy to the tune of 25-40% is being provided for the individual ownership of the farm machinery which is also applicable for farm machinery component under other schemes of the Department for different categories of Machinery & Equipment. The financial assistance @40% is provided for establishment of farm machinery banks to provide custom hiring services for the benefits of small and marginal farmers. For installing solar photovoltaic water pumping system, financial" assistance of Rs. 43,200/Horsepower to Rs. 63,360/Horsepower is provided. To promote the mechanization in selected village with low level of farm mechanization, financial assistance @80% of the project cost for farm machinery banks is given to a group of minimum 8 farmers.

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Hiring assistance for various farm operations carried out through the farm machinery banks set up under financial assistance is also provided @50% of the cost of operation/ha limited to Rs. 2000 per ha. to farmers.

To support the agricultural Mechanization in North Eastern States where the Mechanization level is very low, the maximum permissible subsidy per machine per beneficiary is provided @50% limited to Rs. 1.25 lakh/beneficiary for procurement of various agricultural machinery and equipments for individual ownership, and 95% of the cost of the machinery/Implement up to Rs. 10 lakhs per farm Machinery bank for the establishment of Farm Machinery Banks with a minimum of 8-10 farmers respectively. During the year 2016-17, cost subsidy of Rs. 10.74 crore has already been released in the first installment to NE States under the different components of SMAM.

Under the component 1 of SMAM, Agricultural Mechanization through Training, Testing and Demonstration, a total of 2267 women were trained during the current Financial Year 2016-17, (till December 2016). A list of about 30 identified gender-friendly tools and equipment developed by the Research and Development Organization for use in different farm operations has already been sent to all States and UTs for popularizing them. State Governments have been directed to earmark 30 per cent of total funds allocated under SMAM for women beneficiaries.

To promote the mechanization of small and marginal farm holdings and farm holding in difficult area with low level of mechanization, the efforts have been made to concentrate on establishment of farm Machinery Bank & Hi tech, high productive farm machinery hubs for custom hiring services. Under the components 4,5 & 6 of the SMAM total Rs. 91.44 crore as cost subsidy, has already been released to States in the first installment to establish 1662 Farm machinery Banks for providing the custom hiring services in the country till December 2016.

In order to achieve fast pacing farm growth and increasing the agricultural production, Crop Science Division of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has prioritized research and development programmes in rice, wheat, maize, millets, fodder crops, oilseeds, pulses, sugarcane, cotton and other fiber crops. These research programmes are undertaken by 26 commodity theme based research institutes and 33 All India Coordinated Research Projects (AICRPs) and All India Network Projects (AINPs), mostly situated in State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) to develop location specific crop varieties and matching technologies as per the agro-ecological needs.

The cropâ€¢ improvement programmes give emphasis on development of new crop varieties/hybrids with improved quality and tolerance/resistance to biotic and abiotic stresses and making crops able to withstand the weather extremities. As a result of these efforts, 308 high yielding varieties/hybrids of different crops including 155 of cereals, 50 of oilseeds, 44 of pulses, 33 of fibers, 17 of forages and 9 of sugarcane with fair degree of tolerance to biotic and abiotic stresses have been released for cultivation by the farmers during the year 2016. The structured science and development programmes of ICAR has led to production of 12484 tonnes breeder seeds of different crops during 2015-16 that were supplied to different seed producing agencies so that quality seeds of improved varieties/hybrids could be made available to the farmers for cultivation and boost the productivity and production in major crops.

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The institutes under the Crop Science Division of ICAR is regularly conducting nationwide Front Line Demonstrations (FLDs), on and off farm trainings, skill development programmes, improved technology demonstrations including varieties/hybrids in pursuit of technology transfer and to create awareness amongst the farmers for adopting improved scientific packages and practices to enhance the farm productivity and production. Besides, they are regularly organizing Kisan Melas, Farmers" Field Days, Kisan Gosthis, scientists-farmers interfaces/ meetings on different aspects of crop production & protection, packages and practices, website updating, sensitization through print and electronic media and empowering the farmers with knowledge. In addition, the improved varieties and production technologies were also demonstrated at the farmers" fields by the ICAR institutes, State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) through frontline demonstrations (FLD) programme to create awareness among the farmers about them. Besides, Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India (BGREI) and National Food Security Mission programmes are also being implemented wherein improved agricultural technologies/package of practices, improved varieties/hybrids are promoted. ICAR is providing technical backstopping in these programmes.

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